



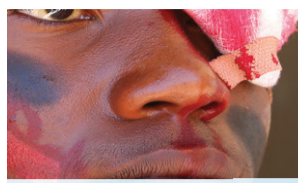
FOOD PARCELS



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



DISABILITY GAMES



NO TO CHILD ABUSE



GOLDEN GAMES

## MEC Mazibuko Honours Top-Performing Foster Care Beneficiaries



Pictures: Eric Malema

Matric top achiever receiving a gift from MEC Faith Mazibuko and Acting HOD Bongani Ngomane at Emperors Palace in Kempton Park

### By Sipho Ncube

On Thursday, Gauteng MEC for Social Development, Faith Mazibuko, honoured 120 children in foster care programme, government run and in funded Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs) for their outstanding performance in the 2024 Matric exams.

These young achievers demonstrated remarkable resilience despite challenging circumstances, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Having been in Grade 8 at the height of the pandemic, many faced significant learning disruptions, relying on virtual and online education with limited resources.

Speaking at the event, MEC Mazibuko commended the learners for their determination and encouraged them to remain focused as they transition to higher education.

"We are here today to celebrate your achievements. When you get to institutions of higher learning, don't change your attitude. Continue to be obedient to your foster parents and keep in touch because they are still your parents," she said.

She further urged the students to seek support when adjusting to new environments.

**"Today, I am grateful because I believe these results will help me build a better future."**

"Don't be despondent when you find yourself alone in a new space. Our department has skills development programs that can also assist you further," she added.

The MEC also extended her gratitude to foster parents for their unwavering commitment to guiding and supporting the children under their care, despite the challenges they face.

As part of the recognition, the department presented the learners with essential gadgets, including smartwatches, to support their post-matric education and studies.

One of the honoured learners, 18-year-old Mpanga Mumba, originally from the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), shared his inspiring journey.

"We came to South Africa with my parents, who later separated. My sister and I were left alone until our pastor took me to Kids Haven (CYCC), while my sister was placed with foster parents," he recalled.

Despite these hardships, Mumba excelled in his studies, earning two distinctions.

"Today, I am grateful because I believe these results will help me build a better future. I am also thankful to Kids Haven and the Department of Social Development for taking care of me and my sister. Thank you a million times," he said.

Mumba is currently in the process of obtaining his passport from the DRC so that he can pursue further studies.

# Makoe's Journey To Sobriety And Second Chance At Life

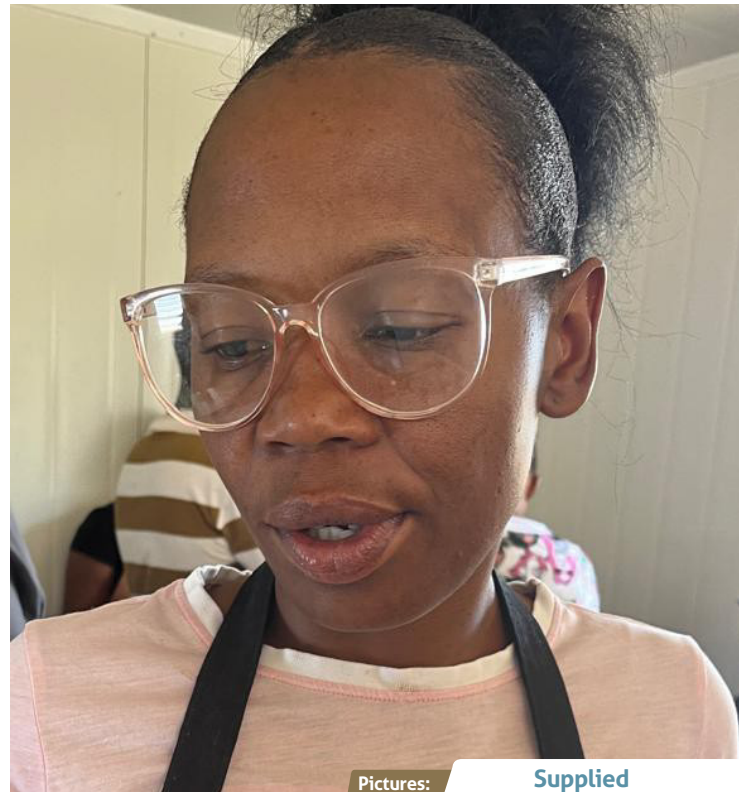
By Matlaba Machethe

For Vincentia Makoe, the past year has demonstrated the transformational power of sobriety. From suffering addiction to embracing a life of purpose and clarity, her story is a beacon of hope for anybody struggling to break free. This is the narrative of her first year sober, a year marked by raw vulnerability, unyielding perseverance, and the rediscovery of a self she believed was lost for good.

Vincentia Makoe is a 32-year-old mother of two residing in Bophelong. After seven years of addiction to crystal meth, she spent three months in rehabilitation and has now been sober for over a year. The turning point came when her youngest child, only three years old, could differentiate the types of drugs Vincentia was using and even demonstrated how to smoke them. "That is when it dawned on me that I had exposed my children to my bad habits," she recounts. "If I didn't change my ways, they could end up like me at a very young age or be taken away."

Driven by the desire to provide a stable home for her children and prevent their removal by Social Workers, Vincentia sought help through Social Development, which led her to the Nigel Rehabilitation Center in Ekurhuleni. There, she embarked on a journey to reclaim her life and health.

Today, Vincentia is a student at Dirang Ka Kagiso Skills Development centre in Bophelong, studying a Hair and Beauty course that covers hair, nails, massage, and feet treatment. "My life has completely changed since I have sobered up," she shares. "I no longer hang with the same crowd I used to. I am in school now, building towards a sustainable future with the skills the center is equipping



Vincentia Makoe

Pictures:

Supplied

me with." Upon finishing her studies, she plans to open a salon in her neighborhood, offering hair and nail services, utilizing the starter pack kit she will receive upon graduation.

With gratitude, Vincentia acknowledges the support she has received: "I would like to thank Social Development for giving me a second chance to be a better mother to my children and equipping me with skills to make an honest living."



# Addiction To Ambition Leads Mohloana To Dream Of Owning Ocean Basket One Day



Pictures: Eric Malema

Former substance user turned street vendor Brown Mohloana selling fish on the streets

## By Madali Chibambu

Thirty-one-year-old Brown Mohloana has turned his life around from substance addiction to entrepreneurship, running a small mobile fish business he calls "Ocean Basket." Now, he hopes to expand his venture with a donated mobile trailer to meet growing customer demand.

A former heroin user, Mohloana's life spiralled as he stole from his family and community, leading to rejection and homelessness. His turning point came when a friend directed him to a department's funded homeless shelter, where he was referred for substance abuse rehabilitation programme. This is where he embraced faith and committed to a new path.

Upon returning, he started selling fried fish with just a box of 30 fish, winning over customers at events and taverns. Today, his business is thriving, but he needed a mobile trolley to expand his offerings.

Beyond business, Mohloana serves as a Pastor, spreading the word of God in various institutions. He also gives back to his community by donating fruits to his local clinic.

His dream is to secure a permanent role in ministry while growing his business to inspire others seeking a second chance.

# Gogo NoloKwe Ready To Showcase Talent At Upcoming National Golden Games



Pictures: Phetoho Maja

Captain of Ubuntu Queens, Gogo Nomonde NoloKwe will represent Gauteng at the National Golden Games in Rustenberg

## By Phetoho Maja

Diski Queen and Captain of Ubuntu Queens, a female soccer team for Older Persons based in Ivory Park, says she is ready to face tough opponents at the upcoming National Golden Games to take place next week, from 17 to 21 February 2025 in Rustenburg, North West Province.

The 64-year-old Nomonde NoloKwe affectionally known as 'Ronaldo' in the field of play says she is proud to represent Gauteng adding that their participation in different sporting codes at the games will be victory for all senior citizens in the province.

Gogo NoloKwe said she feels excited about the games and wants to encourage older persons to participate in active ageing activities and use the social grant money to eat healthy.

**"I believe the team is physically and mentally ready to showcase their talent"**

"As a team, we play regularly during weekends. We participate in a league in Tshwane, and we undergo training sessions three (3) times a week. I believe the team is physically and mentally ready to showcase their talent, we have improved our skills on the pitch, tackling the ball and building stamina," she said.

The Department of Social Development will host the annual National Golden Games for older persons in partnership with the Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation, Department of Health, and Older Persons Forum.

The Golden Games promote active ageing and socialisation amongst older persons and are held in line with the International Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing which encourages new approaches to ageing policies and programmes in order to promote a society for all ages.

During the games, older persons from all nine (9) provinces will display their talents in various sports, indigenous games, and fun games and showcase traditional and cultural activities.

The Golden Games started at a local level, then graduated to district and provincial levels and culminate into national competition.



# Social Development Evaluates NPOs Work On EPWP



Pictures: Kedi Dube

Departmental officials and Management of Perseverance Rural Development Centre

## By Sipho Ncube

The Gauteng Department of Social Development's HIV/AIDS Unit conducted a site visit to Perseverance Rural Development Centre (PRUDEC) in Hammanskraal on Wednesday to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP).

PRUDEC, a Non-Profit Organization, provides psychosocial support, health testing services, and skills development programs to vulnerable children and youth in areas such as Marokolong, Ramotse, and Mandela Village.

Social Work Manager Seipati Motlabane emphasized that the visit aimed to ensure compliance and assess the real impact of services on local communities.

Derrick Masimbi (27), an aspiring HIV/AIDS Counsellor, expressed gratitude for the opportunity PRUDEC provided, saying, "This training has opened doors for me, and I encourage others to take advantage of such programs."

Launched in 2004, EPWP is a government initiative addressing poverty and unemployment by creating work opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled individuals. It is aligned with the National Development Plan and Growing Gauteng Together 2030 Strategy. Through public social programs, the Department also supports Care Workers, Social Auxiliary Workers, and Home-Based Care Workers, ensuring sustainable job creation within the sector.

# Kentsenao Bids Farewell After 40 Years Of Service



Pictures:

Eric Malema

Evelyn Kentsao cleaning at Itereleng Residential Care Facility for Persons with Disabilities

## By Madali Chibambu

After 40 years of dedicated service, 65-year-old Evelyn Kentsenao, a cleaner with a disability, is preparing to retire from Itereleng Residential Care Facility for Persons with Disabilities in Ga-Rankuwa.

However, despite her decades of commitment, she will miss out on this year's Long Service Awards, only qualifying next year when she will have already left.

Kentsenao's journey began unexpectedly. While dropping off her blind aunt at the centre, the Manager noticed her and asked if she could care for babies. Surprised but eager, she accepted the temporary

position, earning just R80 a month. Her dedication soon secured her a permanent role.

Despite standing just half a meter tall, Kentsenao defied expectations, excelling in food aid, nursery care, and laundry. She even took on training new staff. With retirement approaching, she plans to use her passion for cooking to start a food business.

Colleague Maureen Ngobeza describes her as hardworking and always willing to help. As she prepares to leave, Kentsenao's impact and unwavering spirit will be deeply missed.



# From Job Seeker To Mentor As Monyakeni Relates 30-Year Journey Of Dedication



Pictures: Eric Malema

Dr. Fabian Ribeiro and Florence Treatment Centre Groundsman Jerry Monyakeni

## By Madali Chibambu

For Jerry Monyakeni (57), stepping into Dr. Fabian Ribeiro and Florence Treatment Centre, formerly Magalies Oord Sentrum, was the start of a lifelong career. Now, after 30 years of dedicated service as a Gardener, he is set to receive the Gauteng Department of Social Development Long Service Award in February.

Fresh out of matric, Monyakeni and three friends arrived at the institution seeking work, struggling to communicate in Afrikaans and English. Their determination paid off when a White Afrikaans-speaking man put them to the test, assigning them tasks like yard work and tractor driving despite their lack of licenses. To their surprise, they were hired the same day.

Over the years, Monyakeni remained committed to his work, building a home for his family and putting his three children through school, one of whom is now a teacher. As he approaches retirement, he mentors young employees but notices a shift in work ethic.

"Opportunities are scarce, take any job seriously and prove your worth," he advises today's youth.

Monyakeni's story is proof that hard work, perseverance, and the power of dedication ultimately pays off.



# Department Celebrates CYCC and Foster Care Beneficiaries

Pictures:

Eric Malema





# Service Delivery Blitz And Ke Moja Activation Campaign At Palm Springs Mall

📷 Pictures:

Kedi Dube





# Community Dialogue And Service Blitz In Etwatwa, Eastern Corridor

📷 Pictures:

Phetoho Maja





# Men's Forum Valentine's Day Celebration At Germiston Office

📷 Pictures:

Chief Mlangeni





# EPWP Visits Perseverance Rural Development In Hammanskraal

📷 Pictures:

Kedi Dube



For comments, contributions and suggestions please send an email to:

Email: [teddy.gomba@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:teddy.gomba@gauteng.gov.za) or [busi.kheswa@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:busi.kheswa@gauteng.gov.za)